CONTROVERSIAL.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

The Editors reserve the right to erase all improper personalities and objectionable expressions found in any article accepted for this department; and they alone shall be the judges.

Washing Feet after Supper.

From what I have seen and read, it would appear as though the Brethren at large, observe the feet-washing prior to the eating of the supper. We, here in San Francisco, have determined on the more scriptural method of observance, viz: of eating the supper first, which action I think can be fully sustained by the Bible records. In John 13th, the account says, "And supper being ended," or as the revised version gives it, (leaving the above out,) "He riseth from supper," and having previously stated that during supper the devil entered Judas, it would be but reasonable to suppose that they had eaten to some extent, and that supper was in progress, when he arose. Our position is fully sustained, I think by the above. Some have argued that the words, "He riseth from supper," mean that after they were all seated, and ready to begin eating, that he arose and odserved the feet washing; but such position will be found, by careful study, to be untenable. After he attended to the feet-washing, he evidently sat down again, as is clearly shown by the account of John. Believing that the Brethren at large are anxious to comply with the Gospel, I send this for publication hoping it may be the means of correcting what we perceive to be a prevailing error in the church. Yours in Christ, JOHN MILTON.

38 Mary St., San Francisco, Cal., Jan. 15, '84.

What is Man that Thou art Mindful of Him.—Heb. 2:6,

BY J. A. RIDENOUR.

When the infant enters this world he is for a longer time the most ignorant, helpless and dependent of all the animal creation, and it requires more time for him to so mature as to be able to protect, defend and support himself than it does for any other. But he is capable, through proper developement and culture, of becoming the most intelligent, noble and powerful of all God's earthly creatures. All, however, depends upon proper culture. And in order that he be fully developed into the perfect man it must be of three kinds, or of a three-fold character: physical, intellectual and moral or religious. Without this kind of training or with but the physical development, he is simply an animal, glorying in his physical strength, and following the instincts of his animal nature, ignorant, proud, avaricious, intemperate, cruel and hateful. Looking at him, from this his natural state, we may well ask, "What is he, that God should be mindful of him?

But when in addition to his physical development, his intellectual wants have been supplied, and the mind well stored with useful knowledge. His inventive and productive genius brought out, he may become an expert in the arts and sciences, and going on soaring high, and still higher, in the scale of intelligence, until he finally reaches that point, beyond which none can penetrate, in solving the great problem of nature, and he may justly be regarded as a perfect man, physically and intellectually; a useful and important factor in society, and fully realizing his relation to society, he may be humane, polished and polite. And under favorable circumstances, be even good and affectionate. Yet we are supposing that one element of his nature has been wholly neglected. The culture of the heart—moral and religious culture. And with all his superiority, knowledge and advantages you have but to cross his nature, oppose his interests, and all the fire and revenge of his animal nature is at once aroused, and revenge is sought even to the extermination of his adversaries. It is evident that there is still a want of his nature unprovided for.

And this brings us to the consideration of the third and last part of our subject: the moral and religious culture. Take the man of physical and intellectual culture, and bring him properly under the influence of divine grace,—the influence of the Christian religion, where alone this heart culture or religious training can be attained, and you have in such an one the fairest type of the perfect man. And we have an answer to the question asked at the head of the article. It was to take man from his low estate by nature, and elevate him physically, intellectually and morally to the highest possible point in this life, and thus to fit him for a future and better life beyond, that God through Christ, has provided the Gospel plan of human redemption.

A man thus developed and cultured lives not for himself alone, but loves his neighbor as himself. And though he may have enemies he seeks not revenge, but always upon their repentance, he from the heart forgives. Forgiveness of injuries is peculiar to Christianity. Such a man knows he has passed from death to life, because he loves not his brethren only but also his enemies. Christianity makes a man humble, meek, loving and kind-hearted. It makes him honest, truthful, temperate, and social. It makes him an ornament to society, and a blessing to the world while he lives in it, and after death his works follow him. It gives an essential finishing touch to the refinement and manners of any gentleman or lady, no matter how well they may be cultured in every other respect. Oh, that all rich and poor, great and small, could be brought fully under its holy and benign influence. We would then need no prisons for criminals, no criminal courts and lawsuits. We should then have no bloody wars, no standing armies or military schools and navys to support. We should need no locks on our doors or money safes, nor be exposed to deception, fraud, calumny, slander, and intrigue of enemies, for there would be none. There would be no rum sellers, no paupers; but this world would at once be changed from a scene of sorrow, sin and suffering into a paradise of bliss. The prospect of this, was the joy set before Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, for which he was willing to endure the cross, though he despised the shame. And the possibility of thus saving the world from sin and its ruinous consequences, is the reason why "God is mindful of man." But the greatest detriment to the accomplishment of such glorious results of the Christian religion is, the influence of false professors, who have a name to live while they are dead. The wheat and the tares grow together. From the time of Judas Iscariot until now, the church has been cursed with false professors. But this is no argument against true Christianity any more than the existence of counterfeits is an argument against the utility of good money. Some tell us that what we most need now is, better theologies, better adaptations of the truth of the Christian system to present difficulties. But the deepest need of the times is better Christians, that is, more of Christ in His church. We do not need a better Redeemer. He has all power and holiness and love, and has given us a perfect salvation. It is the old faith once delivered unto the saints, a faith enshrined in an authoritative revelation, and centering in the God-man and His atoning sacrifice; a faith which was sufficient for Paul as he stood before the dainty skeptics of Athens, and for Polycarp meeting the rage of the fire in Smyrna, and for David Livingstone dying on his knees in the heart of Africa; a faith which has come out of every conflict with its Bible untorn, and its cross lifted over new battlements of error and wrong, which we are to better adorn and enforce by our lives.—Ellerton, Ohio.

Single-Handed Work.

Many young men covet the position of those who address large audiences. They fail to realize that often much more good is done in pleading with individuals singly. There is little exaltation of self in personal dealing with souls, and God honors those efforts the most where there is the most self-effacement. All our powers are called forth in such service. Then it requires more courage to fight single-handed than in companies. Therefore, young men, seek to do more and more of personal work. Preach the word by the wayside, in the workshop, behind the counter, in your boarding-house, anywhere, everywhere, when you write letters to your friends, tell them what God has done for you. Remember in all your pleadings with friends, to plead with God. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

SELECTED.

Be Not Deceived.

BY LEWIS HANG.

"Be not deceived, for God is not mocked," is given in the Gospel, as an alarm to the soul; a warning to all mankind. Take heed what manner of seed you sow. "Be not deceived." If you sow to the flesh, you shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if you sow to the spirit, of the spirit you shall reap life everlasting. It is impossible for God to be deceived, but possible for man to deceive himself. Even though he had done wonders, and given his body to be burned, and had not charity, it profiteth him nothing in the end. Brethren, watch and pray, that ye be not deceived, for I fear that many who profess to follow Christ will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. I would appeal to my German Baptist brethren; for we are truly brethren, as we have the "one faith, one baptism, and one God." Why do you treat us as though we are but half-brothers, or step-brothers, and some treat us as though we were not brethren at all? "Be not deceived," for we are brethren still, if we continue in the sayings of our blessed Lord. Now, my German Baptist brethren, this same Lord tells us, in his Word, that you should greet all the brethren with a kiss, (2 Thes. 5: 26,) which some of you do, and I respect you for it. But this same Lord said "we ought also to wash one another's feet." If you do the one command and omit the other, what will you answer be to the Lord, in the day of reckoning, for so doing? Be not deceived, simply to gratify the desire of some prejudiced mind; but let us be wise men, and continue in nothing but the whole doctrine which we have learned of Jesus Christ. Then shall we be his disciples indeed. "Be not deceived, for God is not mocked." "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." 1 John, 4: 20, 21. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also. Now, my brethren, I say again, watch and pray, that ye be not deceived. Our Master said, "The servant is not greater than his Lord;" and he said on this wise, "And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses." Mark 11: 25. Brethren, try your spirits, and be sure you have that forgiving spirit. Pray God that he may fill you with that perfect love that casteth out all fear. Let that be the inward monitor of our heart; it will prove to be an anchor to our soul, and will land us safe at home, in Abraham's bosom, to praise God forever more. Amen.—Louisville, Ohio.

Old-Fashioned Mothers.

Thank God some of us have had old-fashioned mothers. Not a woman of the period, enameled and painted, with her great chignon, her curls and her bustle, whose white jeweled hands never felt the clasp of baby fingers; but a dear, old-fashioned, sweet-voiced mother, with eyes in whose clear depths the love-light shone, and brown hair just threaded with silver, lying smooth upon her faded cheek. Those dear hands, worn with toil, gently guided our tottering steps in childhood, and smoothed our pillow in sickness, ever reaching out to us in yearning tenderness. Blessed is the memory of an old-fashioned mother. It floats to us now, like the beautiful perfume of some wooded blossoms. The music of other voices may be lost, but the entrancing memory of hers will echo in our souls forever. Other faces may fade away, and be forgotten, but hers will shine on. When in the fitful pauses of business life our feet wander back to the old homestead, and, crossing the well-worn threshold, stand once more in the room so hallowed by her presence, how the feeling of childhood, innocence and dependence comes over us, and we kneel down in the molten sunshine, streaming through the open window—just where long years ago we knelt by our mother's knee, lisping, "Our Father." How many times, when the tempter lured us on, has the memory of those sacred hours, that mother's words, her faith and prayers, saved us from plunging into the deep abyss of sin. Years have filled great drifts between her and us, but they have not hidden from our sight the glory of her pure, unselfish love.—SEL.

We should advocate no theory which we believe to be false.

The reality of death demonstrates our own insignificance.